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# Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 1/81)

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## NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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JORDAN

SUCCESS OF AL-GHAWR AGRICULTURAL PROJECT DESCRIBED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 7-13 Nov 80 pp 44-45

[Article: "The Jordanian Garden of Eden: \$10 Billion Worth of Investments, Installations and Services in the al-Ghawr"]

[Text] The Jordanian garden of Eden rises over the mounds and hills that look over the Jordan River. This barren Arab country looks to transforming this paradise into a garden to supply the Arab world with fruits and vegetables.

The agricultural project for the Jordan valley, which during the 1970's was an enormous ongoing concern, now represents one of man's most successful conquests in the face of the desert expanse on one side, and on the other cutting down the migration from the country into the cities.

The land here is fertile (most of it had not been cultivated since the days of the Mamlukes when Jordan's al-Ghawr used to supply sugar to the Arab world. The water here is abundant up to a certain point. The area that is planted with vegetables extends 15 kilometers wide and is up to 100 kilometers long. The hopes run high on this land.

The Jordanian government became seriously interested in the al-Ghawr since 1972 when it allocated \$1.5 billion to develop the agriculture and irrigation in the valey. The government was set on realizing some of the goals that the Jordanian economic planners were so concerned with such as reducing dependency on foreign aid in order to defray budget deficits, and also reducing foreign imports of meats and grains.

The government's interest in the Jordan Valley project was embodied in the allocations revealed for this year's fifth development plan and which will expire at the end of this year. The agricultural goal for the plan is to increase the agricultural productivity by 40 percent. In order to realize this goal, the allocations depend to a great deal on developing the al-Ghawr project.

The valley, which lies 200 meters below sea level, furnishes two crops each year: about 150 million kilograms of watermelons per year in addition to 17 million kilograms of citruses. Jordan used to export portions of these crops to Syria; but lately when the relations between the two countries soured, the Syrian authorities stopped all imports as a penalty to the Jordanians. However, the Jordanians found more than one resource available to them for their exports--to other Arab countries and to the Gulf region especially.

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Cultivating the al-Ghawr valley began during the first half of the century when bedouins began planting wheat and barley. During the 1950's, vegetable and fruit crops began to flourish with the increase of Palestinian refugees.

The serious interest in the al-Chawr began at the end of the 1960's. The government decided to construct a canal along the Jordan river. As the canal was expanded southward, farmers moved in that direction sowing vegetable seeds along. And thus, 15,000 hectares of land became to be cultivated and the population increased to 60,000.

The project suffered two setbacks: the first was during the 1967 war and the second when Palestinian guerrillas began launching their attacks from the valley towards the occupied land. But then the project was revitalized and was expanded after Jordan resolved on putting an end to all guerrilla activities launched from its territories.

As for developing the agricultural land in Jordan, priority was given to the al-Ghawr valley. The first stage which ended this year was quite successful: 20,000 hectares of land were cultivated (equivalent to 200,000 dunums), and 22 villages were constructed including complexes, schools and hospitals.

The second stage of the project will begin next year and will continue until 1986. It shall consist mainly of constructing a dam on the Yarmuk river which is located north of the Jordan as well as completing the construction of the villages mentioned above. The end result of this stage is to cultivate 11,000 hectares of land.

The cost for constructing the al-Muqaran dam is estimated at \$850 million. Its wall will be 150 meters high and it will hold behind it 350 million square meters of water, enough to irrigate 22,000 hectares of land (equivalent to 220,000 dunums).

The Jordanian government depends on financing the project on foreign aid and loans. But the American government which had promised \$150 million in aid to the project, reversed its decision and blocked the funds stating that Israel also holds claims to the waters of the Yarmuk river. Besides this, there is Jordan's policies which oppose the Camp David Accord and this leaves the Americans feeling uneasy.

As for investments, the project of the al-Ghawr would be a unique one for the Third World. The majority of the investments are placed by the private sector. The government tries to keep at a distance as much as possible from guiding or contributing in any way to the project.

However, the government's role consists mainly on expending funds on projects in the general services areas such as ensuring supplies of drinking water, electricity and schools, as well as dividing the farm lands into small units (4 hectares) which would benefit mainly the small farmers and offer them loans at low interest rates (5 percent).

Private sector investments in small land ownerships were indeed proven successful as far as cultivating the al-Ghawr valley. There are now 90,000 farmers and peasants working in the valley. Their number is expected to reach 50,000 during the 1980's.

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Currently, the agriculture has reached the stage where it began to reap the benefits of advanced agricultural technology such as making use of enclosed farm lands beneath plastic roofs. It could be said that investments in the Jordan river valley are estimated at \$10 billion including installations, services and crops.

Government experts divide the farm land in Jordan into five categories: The Amman section; the Jordan Valley; Irbid, located to the north; al-'Aqaba, located to the south; and the barren Ma'an section.

As an end result to the interest in the Jordan Valley, there has been talk about cultivating the valley of 'Arba which extends 200 kilometers south of the Dead Sea to the Port of 'Aqaba. But the main problem facing the cultivation of this vital section is ensuring enough supplies of water for its irrigation.

It is true that water supply is the distressing obstacle facing any agricultural expansion in Jordan. From this point on, Jordan puts high hopes on a project to draw the water of the Euphrates River across the desert.

The Iraqis have expressed profound understanding of Jordan's hopes and wishes in this regard. Indeed, a preliminary agreement has been reached earlier this year between the two countries to study possibilities to draw the waters of the Euphrates 200 meters across the desert.

Perhaps Jordan's futuristic dependency on the waters of the Euphrates could be explained as a reason for the narrowing political gaps between the two brotherly countries.

Each year Jordan consumes 500 million square meters of water; four-fifths of this quantity go to irrigation.

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LEBANON

RAYMOND IDDAH DISCUSSES DOMESTIC, REGIONAL ISSUES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 14-20 Nov 80 pp 19-21

/Article: "Raymond Iddah Sounds the Warning Bell: International Forces Must Replace The Forces of Syria and Israel in Lebanon"/

/Text/ Raymond Iddah, the conscience of Lebanon the permanent candidate for the Lebanese presidency who has faced more than one assassination attempt because of his stand of opposition to the presence of Syrian forces in Lebanon, recently returned from his visit to the United States to take up his position in his room in the Hotel Prince De Galles in Paris and conduct a number of contacts every day in order to defend Lebanon and protect its unity and sovereignty.

When AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI met with the Lebanese deputy and leader and the head of the National Bloc Raymond Iddah this week, it was anxious to record his impressions following his visit to the United States and his expectations of what the coming days could be bringing for Lebanon. In his response to the questions, Raymond Iddah was clear, blunt--and violent.

The first question AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI asked of Dean Raymond Iddah concerned the declaration the Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat recently made to the effect that partition had occurred in Lebanon and that a Christian state would be established in Lebanon under the presidency of Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil. The dean responded:

"There is no doubt that President al-Sadat said what he said as a result of information he is still discussing from time to time with Israeli officials. There is no doubt, either, that President al-Sadat is of course informed about the relations between the Phalange leadership and the Israeli authorities. President al-Sadat also knows Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil and greeted him recently on the occasion of the opening of the Suez Canal to shipping.

"Here I reiterate what I previously declared, namely that the plan to establish a diminutive Maronite base is an old one which goes back to the time Ben Gurion was the prime minister of Israel. A meeting was held on 17 February 1954 among Ben Gurion, Moshe Sharett, Lavon and Moshe Dayan to set out plans for Israel's invasion of Egypt and Syria. During the discussion Ben Gurion changed the subject and said, 'The time has come for us to encourage the Maronites in Lebanon to create a Christian state.' However, Moshe Sharett opposed the idea, saying 'The Maronites are divided, and those who hold to the idea of partition are a minority. Establishment of a Christian Lebanon will mean that they will have to give up Sur, Tripoli, and

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al-Biq'a'. No power can bring Lebanon back to its condition of before World War One, that is, 1914, and if it did Lebanon would lose the justification for its existence from the economic standpoint.' Ben Gurion insisted on the plan to establish a diminutive Christian state in Lebanon, although the idea was not carried out, because Israel embarked on the Suez war in 1956.

"In addition, I have been anxious to state time and again, since early September 1974, that there is a project to cypriotize Lebanon and balkanize the Middle East region. In 1975, after the murder of the former deputy Ma'ruf Sa'd, I said that the entity which killed the late well known journalist Nasib al-Matni in 1958 was the same one which killed deputy Ma'ruf Sa'd in early February 1975. The goal was the same, to create disturbances in the hope that a change in the situation of Lebanon would arise from that.

"Thanks to oil, the American Sixth Fleet came to Lebanon after the murder of /Iraq's/ King Faysal, and Lebanon managed to be spared the plot to partition it or merge it into the United Arab Republic at that time. Perhaps if it had been merged at that time Lebanon would have stayed small, with a Maronite majority extending through Mount Lebanon to Zahlah, to the cedars, to Zagharta and to Juniyah. Thus Lebanon would have become smaller than the little Lebanon of before the 1914 war.

"The conspiracy whose implementation began with the killing of Ma'ruf Sa'd is still going on. As you know, I personally refused, as did my party (the National Bloc), to join the Lebanese Front, which thought that it would be able through arms to do away with the Palestinian presence and to establish a little Lebanon with a Maronite majority, and that thanks to its relations with 'the devil' it would be able to reach its objectives.

"Any informed person could easily conclude that it was out of the question that the Lebanese Front could win and realize that Israel's objective was to stand between the Maronites and Moslems in order to reduce the number of Maronites in Lebanon by emigration, because Israel wants to dominate the region and the Arab countries itself and Lebanon, through its composition, has formed an obstacle to the plan which Israel had drawn up because of its good relations with the neighboring Arab countries.

"The result of the events which have occurred since 1975 was as I had expected; the Maronites in the front have today become split. President Sulayman Franjiyah is in the north and cannot go to the Kasrawan area, or to al-Ashrafiyah in Beirut, out of fear of the Phalange, and Pierre al-Jumayyil cannot go to Ar'z al-Rabb after the crime that he and the political council of the Phalange Party (except for a few people) agreed to against the Franjiyah family and some families in Zagharta. Today there is the role of Camille Chamoun, the person who is most responsible for everything that went on since the beginning of the events and the one who planned them. His first objective was to make the Lebanese forget the events of 1958, including the famous issue of the earthquake tax and the development funds. His objective also was to impose himself again as president, although this time the calculations of the field were not applied to the calculations of the treshing-floor.

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"Today, following the slaughter of last 7 July, in which hundreds of young Maronites were killed (523 according to Danny Chamoun, 200 according to the Maronite patriarch, but let's take a compromise figure of 300), a slaughter which the Phalange Party committed by Agreement of Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil certainly and which was greater than the Black Saturday massacre (and it later became apparent that it was a battle which was necessary in order to purge the national ranks, as if all the thieves, smugglers and people with a past had been from the Liberal Party), the result has been that Chamoun was compelled to meet with Shaykh Pierre Jumayyil the following day rather than visit the families of the victims, since he considered it better not to visit them, fearing the mothers' reactions against him.

"In addition, 2 weeks ago events occurred in the outskirts of Beirut, where the Liberal Party had some positions in Furn al-Shibbak and 'Ayn al-Rummanah, and again the Phalange Party defeated the Liberal Party. This time the number of people killed was much smaller but the result brought the final defeat of Chamoun and his party, and today in what I have called from the outset the Maronite ghetto only one party remains, and that is a Nazi party and a fascist party in every meaning of the word.

This party wants to emerge from this ghetto and liberate Lebanon from the Palestinians and Syrians. This is the talk we are hearing and reading in the Lebanese press. However, the Phalange Party has not once mentioned liberating Lebanon from Israel and the Israeli presence in the south, because it does not want to disturb or anger its ally, the 'devil!'

"Today we see that this is the result of the plan Camille Chamoun drew up, the plan which came out of his head as it came out of the heads of others.

"I reiterate that Egypt's President Anwar al-Sadat is no doubt aware of the plan which Israel has drawn up; that is the same plan that Israel had drawn up, as I said previously, in 1954, and its goal is to create a diminutive Lebanon which would be headed by Pierre al-Jumayyil, if his son Pierre agreed to it."

#### The Wolves Are Eating One Another

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI turned to the second question, on the Maronite state (if established) and the likelihood that fighting would arise between the members of the single party in the coming stage. Dean Iddah replied to the question by saying,

"Although we are anxious not to emulate the French revolution, we have seen how those who made it liquidated one another. There is a familiar expression which states 'the wolves eat one another.' In my opinion it is in the interests of the Lebanese people and in the interests of the legitimate authorities in Lebanon that the wolves eat one another. The goal of the skirmishes taking place from time to time is to liquidate the armed personnel so that legitimacy may prevail; however, while there is an Israeli plan which is aimed at creating an atmosphere of disruption in order to make the Palestinians leave Lebanon for Syria, or go to Jordan by way of Syria, the notion of the Palestinian withdrawal from Lebanon is receiving support for the first time from Christians and Moslems alike.

"In addition, in my opinion, the incidents will continue as long as Israel is present in person on Lebanese soil and as long as the Syrian army also is present in

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Lebanon. This is because the conspiracy has broken down into a number of conspiracies. Some people criticize me for having used the word 'conspiracy' from the outset. They say that it is easy to place the responsibility with people who are not Lebanese, while it is the Lebanese who are responsible for the events which have occurred. My answer is that this is true and that the Lebanese are responsible, because some of them took part in the conspiracy, but that when a policy or a plan results in the death of more than 50,000 Lebanese, the dispossession of more than 500,000 Lebanese, and the infliction of damage and destruction costing billions of dollars, I can use the word conspiracy, and I say for the second, third and fourth time that the conspiracy is continuing. However, if the foreigner has decided to come, as we have seen throughout the history of Lebanon, let him put a limit to the conspiracy."

#### International Forces Are Necessary

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI asked Dean Iddah about the way the foreigner would come in order to end the conspiracy against Lebanon. He replied,

"My theory is this: that will take place through the international forces which will take the place of the Israelis in the south and the Syrian army in all areas."

When AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI told Dean Iddah that such an act would have the effect of internationalizing the Lebanese issue, he replied,

"Internationalization exists today in all Arab countries. Not to dwell on the number of cases in the Arab region, let us just mention Syria as an example. International forces have been present in the Golan in Syria since 1973, and the Syrian president, Hafiz al-Asad, is not disturbed about their presence--although he was disturbed when the Lebanese government thought of demanding that international forces be concentrated on the Lebanese-Israeli borders. Today also, as everyone knows, there are hundreds of Soviet foreign military experts in Syria. This is another kind of internationalization.

"As regards what is said about 'arabizing' the Lebanese crisis, I consider that the results of this 'arabization' have brought Lebanon under the Syrian 'mandate,' and I want Lebanon to remain united, sovereign and independent.

"In another area, I do not agree that Israel should take part of Lebanon, as it did some days ago when, in spite of the existence of a truce agreement, it laid its hands without hesitation on the source of the al-Wazzani, which provides 50 million cubic meters of water per year, and 5 million square meters of land in southern territory adjacent to the source of the al-Wazzani. I do not agree that Lebanon should be under Syrian mandate while waiting for Syria to sever the areas it wants to incorporate, which, it has become known to everyone, are al-Biq'a, Tripoli and 'Akkar.

"In addition, if a Maronite ghetto and diminutive Maronite state are established, Syria will try to take the port of Beirut. If it does not take it, it will try to share it with Lebanon."

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#### The Maronite State Will Not Survive

/Question/ But will this Maronite state be able to survive? What future awaits it?

/Answer/ This Maronite state cannot survive economically. Even Moshe Sharett said that in his 18 March 1954 letter to David Ben Gurion, in which he stated "The old Mount Lebanon has been absorbed into an regular union with Sur, Sayda, al-Biq'a and Tripoli. This merger has made Lebanon, including the city of Beirut, a state which has the scope for a balanced economy." He added that reverting to a diminutive Mount Lebanon would mean fragmenting Lebanon, and that would lead to the end of the state. He said, finally, "I cannot imagine that a serious organization would agree to participate in a plan which would mean the economic suicide of Lebanon."

Thus a diminutive Christian state cannot live and keep going.

/Question/ Why in your opinion shouldn't this state survive, when some Maronite Christians are saying that Christian Lebanon could survive as the principality of Monaco survives?

/Answer/ The answer to that question is very easy. First, countries must recognize the establishment of a new country and establish relations with it, and that is not likely yet. I do not believe that that will ever be likely with respect to Lebanon. Second, in order for a diminutive state like the Principality of Monaco to continue to survive economically and politically, the environment in which it lives must help it, accept its existence, and interact with it commercially and politically.

If Lebanon becomes a diminutive Lebanon or a Maronite ghetto, the environment surrounding it will become hostile to it.

This diminutive Lebanese state, as I said previously, will be a state of expatriots, since the Lebanese by nature refuse to live under the dominance of a single party and do not accept any dictatorship, be it civilian or military. Nor can the Lebanese live economically on a limited area. Before the events occurred, that is, before 1975, emigration from Lebanon started to increase greatly, especially from the south, whose people headed to Africa, and from the north, whose people headed for Australia. Lebanon was more than 10,000 kilometers in area; how could the Lebanese people live on an area of land totalling just 1,800 square kilometers (that is, if they succeed in getting Zagharta in northern Lebanon)?

People Who Commit Crimes against the Nation

/Question/ What about the future of the Syrian forces in Lebanon?

/Answer/ From the outset, that is, on 8 June 1976, I sent an appeal to the Lebanese people stating "1 June must be the first day of the Lebanese people's struggle against the Syrian regime which has ordered the invasion of Lebanon." I said that our country, Lebanon, had borders which were "the borders of its independence and sovereignty." I mentioned some articles in the Penal Code and said that the first

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dity of every citizen was to preserve the unity of his country. I said, "If everyone has his own view of the country and what national duty imposes on him, that will be the end of the country." To this end, the Lebanese Penal Code, in Article 274, stipulates the following:

"Any Lebanese who intrigues with a foreign country or gets in contact with it to prompt it to initiate aggression against Lebanon or to provide it with the means to do so will be punished by hard labor for life. If his action leads to results, he will be punished by death."

Finally, I said:

"The night before (that was the night of 6 July 1976), Beirut and its suburbs went through the worst of times. It was a night of conspiracy which I could not describe, a night of Syrian terror which sowed death, fire and blood without discrimination. That is the Syrian peace that some people have promised and others have wished." Finally, I said:

"You, with your federation, Christians and Moslems, will crush the invasion. By ignoring the causes of dissension among you you will save Lebanon. Lebanon cries out to you and waits for you to answer its call."

However, the result was the opposite, and there is no hope for the person who calls. In spite of all that, a day must come when the Penal Code, and Article 274 specifically, are applied to the persons who conspire against Lebanon and they must not count on the principle of letting time pass to cover their crime against the country, since there is an international interpretation dealing with war criminals which the Lebanese legislators can draw upon tomorrow with retroactive effect in order to catch up with them and punish them.

My Complaints against Sarkis

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI repeated the question about the future of the Syrian forces in Lebanon. Dean Jddah replied,

"Some time ago I recommended a solution, which is the only solution in my opinion, and that calls for international forces to come to Lebanon. If the United Nations and the big powers decide to save Lebanon, the Security Council must decide to send international forces to take the place of Israel and the Syrian forces."

/Question/ Such a matter would require an initiative on the part of the Lebanese president. Do you consider that the Lebanese president, Ilyas Sarkis, has the ability to perform such an initiative?

/Answer/ This question could be directed to President Ilyas Sarkis. I personally have my complaints--political, of course--against President Sarkis. From the first moment I asked him to go abroad, discuss the situation and fate of Lebanon with heads of state, and to go to the United Nations and give a speech defending the Lebanese cause, because there is a Lebanese cause, and not, as some people say, a Lebanese problem. They said "There is a Palestinian cause and a Lebanese problem."

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I say there is a Palestinian cause and there is also a Lebanese cause. Why doesn't President Sarkis go abroad, as most heads of states do, and present the Lebanese cause?

I am amazed today, now that Israel has put its hands on the source of the al-Mazzani and a plot of land 5 million square meters in area, that the president did not immediately summon the ambassadors of the five big countries and ask them about each of their countries' position. How can one agree that the case of the al-Wazzaniis dealt with the way the issues of Israels' daily raids against southern Lebanon are dealt with?

In my opinion, Israel's recent conduct is very serious, because it constitutes the start of the implementation of a process of taking over southern Lebanon up to the al-Litani. After a while, Israel will contrive an incident to exploit in order to justify overrunning Lebanese territory until it reaches the al-Litani River, after having driven out 250,000 villagers, Shiites especially, as it did during its March 1978 raid.

Today I would like to direct the attention of the Lebanese president and premier to the fact that Israelis are able to dig a tunnel 3 kilometers long near Dayr Mimas to take the al-Litani water from near the al-Khardali Bridge (in southern Lebanon), and I do not think it is possible for Sa'd Haddad to prevent that!

The president must discuss and study this grave possibility with the ambassadors of the big powers, and the foreign minister must ask international observers to go to the al-Wazzani and al-Mitullah and observe the area in order to confirm that Israel is not starting to dig a tunnel. Today it is building a wide road to the al-Wazzani. Will the Lebanese president be serious about this issue, or will he answer with the customary indifference?

If the Syrians Suddenly Withdraw!

Since Mr Raymond Iddah had recently returned from the United States, AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI asked him:

"The Syrian forces entered Lebanon after getting the green light from America. Is the green light still on?"

/Answer/ That question is pertinent, but I will only be able to answer it after the new American president, Ronald Reagan, assumes his responsibilities and the reins power. In any event, if the Syrian army suddenly withdraws from Lebanon international forces do not take its place, terrible fighting will start among Lebanese, and as long as there is the possibility that the Syrian army may withdraw suddenly, we must think of an alternative, especially since the Lebanese army, as we see it, is not able to fill the security vacuum. This alternative, in my opinion, is the international forces.

/Question/ What are the impressions you brought back from America regarding the situation in Lebanon?

/Answer/ The people I met with, top figures in the Republican and Democratic parties, asserted to me that Lebanon would remain united within its internationally

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recognized boundaries, but, although they said this, the Lebanese war has lasted 5 years and we do not feel that this statement has been applied. Therefore I told them that people who are beaten with a stick are not like the people who provide it, and that Lebanon has had enough blows with the stick in the interests of others during the 5 years. I would like to believe that the new era in America will preserve the sovereignty and unity of Lebanon, but the officials in Lebanon must get moving, explain the Lebanese cause, and prove to the Americans that an independent sovereign Lebanon constitutes a political and economic necessity for them. Naturally, when I say political I do not mean that Lebanon should embark on aggressive acts against any Arab country, and I do not and never will agree that Lebanon should be a center of conspiracy against any Arab regime; every Arab country has full freedom to choose the political system which conforms to the interests of its people. America, the mother of democracy, must protect Lebanon, because it is the only Arab country which enjoys a democratic parliamentary system. Israel's system is sectarian, contrary to what it claims, and it does not have a written constitution, but Lebanon does have a written, non-sectarian constitution, except for Article 95 which stipulates the following:

"In temporary fashion, and beseeching justice and reconciliation, the factions will be fairly represented in public positions and the composition of the cabinet, without that bringing harm upon the interests of the state."

This is the only article which mentions sectarianism. This article was set out to preserve the coexistence among all the officially recognized factions, which are 17 in number. Where in this sectarian coexistence is Israel, which has tried to put its hands on the grave of the Messiah, put its hand in 1948 on two Christian villages near the Lebanese-Israeli border, Ikrit and Kafr Bar'am, and to this day does not allow the Maronites and Roman Catholics of the villages to return to their homes and land and has not compensated them?

Another Visit to America--Maybe

Regarding the partition of the Middle East area and his view on that matter, the dean said:

"Israel wants to dominate the region. Therefore, for the hundredth time, I repeat the expression 'balkanization of the region;' Israel has an interest in having a number of sectarian statelets established in this region in order to justify the existence of the Israeli Hebrew state. But will this scheme be carried out after Ronald Reagan becomes president of America? This question is raised today but it cannot be answered until Reagan takes the reins of power."

Regarding the fact that Americans of Lebanese stock voted for President Reagan, the dean said:

"Americans of Lebanese stock are heavily concentrated in Brooklyn (that is, New York), Boston (Massachusetts) and Detroit (Michigan). Most of their votes, I believe, went to Reagan."

Question Do you intend to visit the United States again?

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The answer was in one word:

"Perhaps."

A President in an Independent Country

The last question AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI directed to the dean was on the poll a Lebanese magazine made, which states that the overwhelming majority of Lebanese preferred Raymond Iddah as a future president.

The dean smiled and answered,

"I only want to be the president of an independent sovereign state. That does not mean that I am evading my responsibilities; that is because I in my political activities, which I have not ceased practicing as a deputy and head of a party, the National Bloc, have had as the prime goal restoring union to Lebanon and consequently regaining its sovereignty from those who have taken it over. I believe that it is possible for me to work on behalf of Lebanon as a united sovereign independent state without being president."

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LEBANON

CITIZENS EXPLOIT URBAN CHAOS, TAKE OVER PROPERTY OF STATE

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 7-13 Nov 80 pp 47-50

/Article: "Beirut: The Republic of Violations"/

/Text/ Beirut, the city which has not slept for 5 years, exhausted by war, many of its features changed, now is called "the republic of violations and contradictions."

The open war in Lebanon, which began on 13 April 1975, turned the Lebanese capital into an open city without laws or statutes. Even someone wandering about in the sections of Beirut--if spared the sniper's bullet or the shrapnel of an explosive charge--can plainly and without exertion see the phenomena of change and the difference between Beirut of today and Beirut of yesterday. The battles which went on in the heart of the Lebanese capital were a cause of the change in the cultural and demographic face of Beirut; some sections have been totally obliterated and there are areas which have been fundamentally transformed. Some population concentrations no longer exist. These and other things have of necessity prompted the emergence of other sections, at the expense of state lands or the property of other people. This all happened through the neglect of the law, at the time Beirut was subjected to one law, the law of war. These developments occurred when the statutes in effect and the laws observed were hidden in the civil war shelters and did not have the power to appear, and there were no rules, no barriers and no limits to confront the law of arms and the stipulations of the "influential strongmen."

Thus the process of occupying apartments and homes continued, and towering buildings were erected on state lands without building permits or any legal procedures. The process of purchasing and selling came to a stop, while some people managed to build where they wished without questions or answers. The government is standing with its hands tied, unable even to spell out the policy it will follow to cope with this situation.

An informed source in the "civilian organization," who for personal reasons refused to give his name states, in this regard, "The government has not yet settled its affairs or determined its position on the illegal buildings which have gone up through the neglect of the law. This may be ascribed to the absence of a clear law which will observe this issue and to the proliferation of bodies concerned with this issue. There is a tendency which calls for the issuance of a law containing an order to destroy the various illegal buildings, and there is another view which calls for recourse to the technique of negotiations to create a compromise solution."

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Whatever the official position of the government may be, it does not possess the security tools to carry out its desires to destroy or even conduct negotiations between trespassors and persons trespassed against. In spite of all that, it is correct to say that numerous "republics," based on violations which have their laws and their limits, their leaders and commanders and guardians, have grown and made their appearance in Beirut!

## Beirut before the War

In the absence of accurate statistics on the status of the capital before the war, one cannot talk about the changes in the construction activity which the Lebanese war has brought to the fore, with its various domestic and foreign complications. The Lebanese government constantly tried to avoid carrying out a cultural and population census, in view of political circumstances and the domestic balance of power. In spite of that, some tabulating activities, and studies on construction centers in Beirut in particular did appear; the most important of these were studies conducted by Alexander Gibb in 1944, the American (Ibrefd) mission in 1959, the Frenchman Claude Masure in 1963, and the Ministry of Public Planning in 1964 and 1970.

Today, carrying out new studies and statistics on the cultural and demographic situation is nearly an impossible task in view of the state of disruption the civil war has imposed and because mobile war is daily throwing more masses of people out of the places where they reside and consequently redrawing the map of construction activity in the country, especially in the capital--to the point where the Lebanese citizen has come to resemble a land bird carrying its possessions in its beak and moving from area to area, in search of new lodging, escaping the struggles of combatants and the dangers of war.

The Central Department of Statistics in Beirut issued a statement in November 1970 shedding light on the population of Beirut, which totalled 474,870, or 22.3 percent of the total population of Lebanon. The statement pointed out that the city of Beirut and suburbs, or what is known as "Greater Beirut," is considered the main center of concentration since it contains 45 percent of Lebanon's total population. That may be attributed to the fact that Beirut houses most official departments and economic and industrial sectors, and the importance of this fact--that is, the fact that Beirut is very densely populated--facilitates the task of shedding light on the changes which have occurred during and after the war.

## The War and the Destruction

The civil war changed the cultural and population situation and redrew the cultural map in accordance with new equations in which numerous interconnected elements entered. The most important thing the war brought to the fore, through the war of dispossession, was, as we mentioned above, the appearance of new districts and sections after the deterioration of old ones. Figures stress that Beirut is basically the foremost Arab capital in terms of population density, but the destructive war which ground on inexorably in the densely populated areas caused 21,881 families comprising 166,563 people, to be uprooted. These families are Lebanese and Palestinian--92.32 percent Lebanese and 6.67 percent Palestinian. These figures appear in the aid data of 19 April 1979.

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After most of these families' dwellings were destroyed and they were prohibited from returning to their areas as a consequence of the partition which had occurred in the country, some people tried to procure lodging and housing by one of the following means:

1. Occupying empty apartments, especially in the al-Hamra', Verdun and al-Ramlah al-Bayda' areas. The situation prompted them to occupy whole buildings which were finished or in the process of being built.
2. Occupying hotels, seaside cabins and some buildings of official and private organizations.
3. Constructing buildings on the property of other people and on the property of the government and the municipality of Beirut. That is clearly apparent in the population complexes which arose along the route extending from Beirut international airport to the heart of the capital and along the al-Awza'i Road (the southern entrance into the capita). In one case it even reached the point where a building was constructed in the divider strip of the expressway in al-Ghubayri.

Commercial structures proliferated in the heart of the capital, especially in the al-Rushah area--in a manner violating the law, of course--after the destruction which had taken place in the shops and the fires in various commercial establishments there.

This new state of affairs is to be considered one of the most serious developments of the civil war, considering that the authorities are standing hesitantly in the face of it: shall they acknowledge the fait accompli or decide to issue a law to destroy the illegal property and buildings?

On 5 August 1977 the Lebanese Council of Ministers issued a law aimed at settling the building violations, applying this law to violations which occurred between 1971 and 1979. It contains the following:

Article One. Buildings or parts of buildings erected by a tenant or investor contrary to the will of the owner, or erected on the property of others, on public property of the government, public organizations or municipalities within the limits of expressways or constructed roads of any category, or in areas where construction has been prohibited because of their archaeological character or for reasons of public safety and health, such as aviation safety and sanctuaries of springs, will be destroyed without compensation of any form at the expense and by the responsibility of the person committing the violation.

Article Two. Buildings or parts of buildings erected on planning areas and their approved and unconstructed open spaces or special state lands will be destroyed without compensation of any form at the expense and by the responsibility of the person committing the violation.

Article Three. The owner of the building or parts of building erected on his personal property in violation of building laws and statutes will choose whether:

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A. To remove the violation.

B. To pay a fine to be specified in accordance with the principles.

One may deduce the government's position through this law, even though it is not totally clear. However, the main problem which it poses is that the government does not possess the security instrument to carry this law out; therefore, it remains incapable even of putting a limit to continued violations and the aggravation of this problem.

The government, through the domestic security forces, recently tried to destroy some illegally erected buildings and commercial properties, but its attempts were aimed at certain individual violations which were remote from /areas under/ the dominance of armed militias. Following these attempts, most Lebanese officials became convinced that the solution to this problem had to await the solution to the entire Lebanese problem and that there is no room today to talk about eliminating the building violations before an effective deterrent security force is available.

Until the government exists and provides its specialized security forces, and until groups, friends, enemies and brothers agree on solving the Lebanese crisis in a manner which will guarantee the elimination of illegal phenomena, including building violations and illegal structures, Beirut will remain "the republic of various republics at variance."

In spite of the numerous official Lebanese agencies concerned with cases of illegal building violations (the Civil Organization, the domestic security forces, the Municipality of Beirut, the Ministry of Housing and so forth), the Ministry of Interior remains the main source and body directly responsible for this case, since the various agencies and departments are ultimately connected to the Ministry of the Interior, which is concerned with the country's domestic affairs.

In the course of discussing illegal building violations and the reasons which lie behind them, Mr Samih al-Sulh (director general of the Lebanese Ministry of Interior) says that the civil war which has lasted 5 years was the most prominent factor in the expansion of this phenomenon throughout Lebanese territory, since the war of dispossession constituted the first force behind the changes which occurred in the population and geographic structure of Lebanon.

Following the war, the government was weakened, its security instruments collapsed, and citizens sought refuge in those who would protect them and help them commit violations and devote themselves to trespassing against public and private property, whether through threats of arms, force or bribery.

The director general of the Ministry of the Interior defines the types of violations as follows:

1. Violations on the property of the person himself, such as building without permits.
2. Trespass against the property of others.
3. Trespass against the property of the state.

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He goes on: "The time must come when the various types of violations will be dealt with in the light of the decision recently issued by the Lebanese Council of Ministers calling for the elimination of illegal buildings present on the property of the government and public organizations and the elimination of buildings on the property of other people. People committing violations on their own property will be compelled to pay fines determined by the nature and size of the offense."

In response to a question on the attempts the Lebanese security agencies recently made to eliminate some violations and destroy a number of buildings violating legal principles, al-Sulh says,

"The domestic security forces are working earnestly to apply the law, but the current security circumstances and the spread of arms among the citizens prevent the implementation of the laws. However, when matters become fully stabilized, the government agencies will without a doubt be able to impose the law absolutely and eliminate the various violations made against the principles, statutes and laws in effect."

/Question/ But don't you believe that solving the case of illegal buildings is linked with a solution to the case of uprooted people and consequently requires a political decision?

/Answer/ What cannot be doubted is that it is necessary first to arrive at a political decision to return uprooted people to their homes and dwellings in order to eliminate some of the causes of the construction of illegal buildings, by stressing that there is no alternative to national reconciliation to solve the complex of domestic issues in Lebanon. Returning uprooted people to their districts will have the effect of returning the Lebanese balance to equilibrium. Proceeding from this premise, it is necessary first to strive to arrive at a political reconciliation which will help solve the case of uprooted persons, then start setting forth an integrated housing program which will give top priority to the return of uprooted persons and pay attention to the changes which have occurred in the population situation since the war. The integrated housing plan will have the effect of solving this case justly and scientifically as well.

What Do the Violators Say?

After the domestic security forces had destroyed and eliminated some violations, some local organizations condemned this act, considering that absolutely all solutions to the case of illegal buildings must be preceded by a clear decision on the part of the authorities to return uprooted persons to their districts. It is well known that the government has not yet taken this kind of decision. In this regard, Mr Usamah Fakhuri (head of the political bureau of the city of Beirut of the national parties and forces) says, "The case of uprooted persons is the case of all Lebanon. We will never arrive at national reconciliation and understanding unless their case is solved, they are all returned to their homes, and their rights to life and housing, like those of other citizens, are received."

It was essential to seek the views of some citizens constructing buildings on property which does not belong to them, on the land of others, or on the land of the government, to ascertain their views and conditions regarding this matter.

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Citizen Hasan Khalid is constructing a two-story building on property of others, in the al-Awza'i area, saying, "In answer to the government decision to destroy illegal buildings which might be constructed on other peoples' land, we say that we do not want to expropriate land or buildings and that we are ready to leave the building, with its contents, to the owner of the land when our property is returned to us."

He adds, "However, if the government tries to implement its decision before returning our property, we will resist it since we no longer have anything to be afraid of. We have lost what we own. It would have been more worthy for the state to have repressed the militia which uprooted us before taking this decision. I would like to point out that we have adequate ability to defend ourselves if the security forces try to oppose us, and the Lebanese Arab Army is on our side."

Citizen Bakhtiyan 'Assaf, who lives illegally in a small house and shop on land belonging to someone else, was living in the al-Dikwanah area before the war. Commenting on the government condemnation decision, he says the following, "I am prepared to leave the home and shop because they are on land which does not belong to me. I do not want to stay far away from my house and home. However, it is natural that the government should return my occupied home to me before all else. This is my right. Our property was burned down and the government sat still, not moving, our homes were destroyed, our families were dispossessed, and we lost everything we owned. So far the government has taken no decision, even political, to return us to our districts. What do you suppose it expects from us, except a challenge to its decision?"

The citizen Mahmud Mastafa, from a southern village (Marun al-Ras), fled to the capital and took up residence in the al-Ghubayri section. He lives in a one-story building on land which belongs to the municipality. He says,

"Previously, I lived in the al-Nab'ah area. The Phalange Militia drove us out and we moved to the south. From there we were compelled to leave our town in the south, under the escalating Israeli aggressions. Here I would like to ask officials: where do you want us to go, at this stage? There are only two things before us: either to stand up to this decision or to go into the sea. However, the issue has become unbearable and we citizens have our right to live on our land. We will die for that right. We will absolutely not stint in resisting if the authorities drive us out again."

We should point out that there have been illegal buildings in Beirut since the 1958 revolution and that the government has not been able to eliminate them, in view of numerous considerations, including interrelationships, patronage, electoral and regional interests, and so on. In other words, that means that the "problem" is not really a wholly new one for the country.

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LIBYA

UK CORRESPONDENT INTERVIEWS AL-QADHDHAFI

LD051057 London NOW! in English 5 Dec 80 pp 18-19

[Interview with Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi, Libyan revolutionary leader, by Christopher Dobson, in Tripoli; no date given]

[Excerpt] Sitting in his headquarters in Tripoli last weekend, Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi did not blink an eyelid when I asked him if he would give the British public some assurance about the murder of Libyans by Libyans on British soil.

He gave a little shrug and in an impassive voice, rather as if he was lecturing a backward student, said: "It is not a matter with which the British should concern themselves. It is a matter which concerns only Libyans and is purely a Libyan problem. These actions are not against the British and I hope the British Government and people will understand this. It is a struggle between the new Libyan society and the old."

There is a gruesome irony in the fact that even as he said this the body of a Libyan student, Ahmed Mustafa, who had been active in Arab politics at Manchester University, was lying dead, allegedly of stab wounds, in a Manchester flat.

Al-Qadhdhafi's answer was a perfect example of his thinking. He honestly cannot understand the fuss we make when his hit teams murder his opponents, or simply those Libyans who prefer not to go home, in Britain. He really does expect to be able to reach out and assassinate among Libyan communities abroad without arousing the anger of the country concerned.

When Muhammad Mustafa Ramadan, a journalist who criticised his regime, was shot down outside the Regent's Park mosque in April, he made a statement which seemed to indicate that he would end the killings--except for traitors who had contacts with Egypt, Israel or the United States and "deserved to die."

But last weekend he washed his hands of the killings, saying: "It is a matter for the People's Congress."

It was as if he had no control over the decisions of the congress and the revolutionary committees, who supposedly decide who is to be killed. The fact is that no decision of importance is taken in Libya without the approval of the guide of the revolution.

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I interviewed al-Qadhdhafi at his headquarters, Bab al Azizir. He takes no chances, the main gate is guarded by four Soviet-build heavy tanks settled into landscaped permanent emplacement and there are anti-aircraft emplacements around the walls. We sat in a quite small office. There were maps on the wall, leather-covered books on the shelves, a gold-fringed green flag on his desk, and there was al-Qadhdhafi himself, wearing a trench-coat and beautifully-cut leather mules on his sockless feet. He looked tired--the interview had been postponed continually throughout two days of waiting--but his dark eyes gleamed as if shining through a mask.

He answer the first questions in a monotone, almost as if talking to himself. But he laughed when I asked him how he thought relations would develop between Libya and Great Britain.

It was the use of "great" which had amused him. "Britain," he said, "is no longer great. It used to be in former days but is no longer." As for relations between the two countries, "there is the general possibility for great co-operation between the two countries but we feel that the British side is a little cool."

Coolness from other nations is a state of relations to which he is becoming increasingly accustomed. In fact originally the interview had been arranged at a day's notice, to witness his rebuttal of charges that he had sent the Libyan Army to intervene in the civil war in Chad. All he had done, he said, was to send some presidential palace guards and a few military advisers to aid the legal and legitimate government of President Oueddei Goukouni as he was obliged to under a treaty of friendship. He had also supplied humanitarian aid to alleviate the famine caused by the civil war.

The culprits, he said, were Egypt and Israel, who were arming the rebels and the United States, the scheming to take over French interests in Africa. He impressed on the French correspondents present how he saw the Americans attacking French interests in Africa and Europe. The French no doubt will be astonished to hear him declare that France is his best friend in Europe and that he hopes to visit France after the presidential elections there--thus calmly ignoring the fact that the French Embassy has still not been fully repaired after being sacked in February by an officially inspired mob "protesting" about military aid given by the French to Tunisia. This followed an attack on the Tunisian town of Gafsa by a band of rebels trained and equipped by Libya.

Al-Qadhdhafi said he had visited the oasis town of Aouzou, a town that most people believed to be part of Chad. Al-Qadhdhafi's claims that a strip of land, thought to be rich in uranium, including Aouzou is really Libyan and he called for a school atlas to prove his point.

The truth of all this coolness and wrangling is that most of the countries in the area have already turned against his regime and did not need "American intrigues" to make them do so.

Al-Qadhdhafi's own behaviour is sufficient. Ghana, Gambia, Gabon and Senegal, have broken off diplomatic relations. Dom Mintoff, who at one time based Malta's future on his friendship with al-Qadhdhafi, has quarrelled with him over oil rights in the Mediterranean. The Nigerians are none too pleased with his activities in Chad. The situation is much the same among the Arab countries.

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He despises King Husayn of Jordan, and during the interview he threatened his arch-enemy President Anwar al-Sadat with military action in the Eastern Sahara, better known as the Western Desert. He argued that Libyan territory reached as far as kilometre 9, well inside the Egyptian border, and said that if al-Sadat did not stop his aid to the Chad rebels, "I shall be forced to give the green light to the movement for the liberation of the Eastern Sahara."

He added: "We will not allow ourselves to be encircled by hostile regimes." But that is precisely what his policies are bringing about. Only Syria, with which he has made a dubious agreement to unite and the hardline People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, can be classed as allies, except for the communist countries and Cuba.

He also supports Iran in its war with Iraq. But even there, such is the ephemeral nature of Arab alliances and his own mercurial nature, that no friendship he makes can be regarded as permanent or promises relied upon.

The interview lasted about an hour and, with a handshake and another searching look from that laser-beam eyes, I was driven out past the tanks into the hubub of Tripoli.

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LIBYA

'THE TIMES' ACCUSED OF SPREADING RUMORS

LD151631 London THE TIMES in English 13 Dec 80 p 5

[Dispatch by Karan Thapar: "Western Press Accused by Libya"]

[Text] Lagos, 12 Dec--The Western press in general and THE TIMES in particular has been accused of deliberately spreading rumour and falsehood concerning Libyan intentions in Africa. This was said in an interview with THE TIMES by Dr Ali al-Turayki, the Libyan foreign minister, on a visit to Nigeria.

"It is the Western press that hates us. It is you who talk nonsense, purely allegation. It is wishful thinking from you that things are bad. We have not heard anything officially from any state," the minister said.

In the past few months Ghana, Gambia, Gabon and Senegal have broken relations with Libya over the issue of its alleged interference within their borders.

Recently, in an interview with THE TIMES Professor Ishaya Audu, the Nigerian foreign minister, expressed disquiet over Libyan actions and intentions.

When asked about the Libyan activities in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, the Libyan minister said that two Libyans had been there with visas from the Nigerian Embassy in Tripoli. "When Nigeria asked for them to be withdrawn they were immediately."

Dr al-Turayki's unexpected arrival in Lagos this week came after reports that the Libyan ambassador in Nigeria was about to be expelled for his "undiplomatic" activities. When asked about this, Dr al-Turayki said heatedly that relations were excellent.

On the question of Libyan military involvement on the side of President Goukouni Oueddei (correct as printed) in Chad, Dr al-Turayki said: "There is no Libyan Army in Chad. There are only Libyan legions and technicians asked for by the legal government in accordance with the Freetown resolution and summit which asked all African states to support President Goukouni Oueddei's national reconciliation government. The United Nations is informed of this."

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MOROCCO

RABAT INTENSIFIES, DIVERSIFIES ITS DIPLOMATIC EFFORT

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 14 Nov 80 p 3005

[Text] The fifth anniversary of the "green march" was celebrated on 6 November in Rabat with the participation not only of the army and the popular associations originally associated with this historic accomplishment, but also of the "blue men" representing the Saharan populations: for the Moroccan Government, putting the representatives of the "provinces of the South" in the limelight in Freetown and New York, hopes to persuade international opinion that an authentic majority of the Saharan people are not in the camps of Tindouf and in the ranks of the POLISARIO, but well within the borders of the Kingdom.

The emphasis is placed, in official information, on the effectiveness of the military forces: "In recovered Sahara our royal armed forces are in control of the terrain"; this line is found in all the media. In fact, the strongly fortified Moroccan posts established south of Draa, from Zag to Abatieh, are interdicting the deep penetration of sizable Saharan elements, and a surprise attack on Tan Tan, for example, is no longer thinkable; on the other hand, further south, and this time in the territory of the old Spanish Sahara, the Hagounia-Smara-Boujdour triangle that includes Laayoun and the phosphate mines of Bou Craa is solidly held by Moroccan forces. With support from these bases, the three operational Moroccan groups--Quhoud, Zallaqa, el Arak--are trying to intercept the Saharan "katibas" operating between Tindouf and the Atlantic, and every encounter gives rise to bloody fighting. South of Saguiat al Hamra, with the exception of several coastal locations such as Boujdour and Dakhia, lies the "rotten zone" which by contrast is habitually frequented by POLISARIO elements.

The "control of the terrain" claimed by the Moroccan Army does not, however, prevent some audacious Saharan raids; and the foreign press being allowed to roam practically free in Morocco, everyone has read the tale by Mr Daniel Junqua of the expedition to which the POLISARIO invited him and which was conducted without any impediments from 9 to 13 October in the immediate proximity of Ras al Khanfra, an advance post of Abatieh (LE MONDE, 22 October). Two very violent battles--the Moroccan and POLISARIO accounts of which, as it customary, differed greatly--took place on 22 October near Ras al Khanfra and on 26 October west of Haouza, that is, on the very outskirts of the Moroccan defense deployment. At the very moment when the Saharan question was being debated in New York, the POLISARIO hoped to demonstrate its freedom of movement on the territory, and Morocco underlined the invulnerability of its forces defending the loyal populations.

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This recovery, quite tangible even if partial, in the military situation of the Moroccan forces, was achieved through considerable effort; more than half the Moroccan soldiers are engaged in this "battle of the South." The increase in military expenditures could not have been realized—and can not be continued—except at a cost to the development effort.

But the Moroccan public has been showing, especially since the second OAU conference at Freetown, a resurgence of optimism; it is generally held probably that the conflict will go on another year. If, in a general way, people reckon that, under the aegis of friendly African nations, a compromise solution will take shape, all the same no one considers that Morocco could renounce the smallest parcel of the "recovered territories;" also, the prevailing opinion is that Mauritania, whose sudden changes of position are harshly judged, should "pay the costs of the operation," which a slight change in the Algerian position would finally make it possible to achieve.

A keen sense of disappointment, however, was stirred up by the close defeat before the 4th Commission of the United Nations of what was called the "African" resolution, which Moroccan diplomacy had endorsed. Comores, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Morocco, the Saudi Arabian kingdom, Senegal and Zaire recommended that the OAU, and more particularly the "Committee of Wise Men", continue their efforts and report back to the United Nations, which would have signified that the latter were provisionally going to forswear playing the active role in investigating the conflict that was urged by the friends of the POLISARIO.

The failure of this diplomatic maneuver was felt all the more vividly in Rabat because it had simultaneously been hoped there would be a softening of the "hard line" preached by Algeria. The emotion felt by the Moroccan people at the news of the catastrophe of Al Asnam; the enthusiastic initiative, for the benefit of the Algerian victims, of a sale of the skins of lambs sacrificed during the Festival of Aid al Kebir; the courteous words, admittedly official but certainly sincere, spoken by Rabat to Algiers on the occasion of this tragic event; the rumor of the visit to Algiers of a discreet Moroccan emissary, made an impression on the Moroccan public.

So then in Morocco it was the diplomacy conducted by Istiqlal's secretary general, Mr M'hamed Boucetta, also foreign minister, which was challenged by the political adversaries of the party.

In the independent camp, whose National Rally of Independents moreover is not considered highly effective, the criticisms were muted; it was not the same within the left, where the Socialist Union of Popular Forces and the Party of Liberation and Socialism showed themselves to be virulent. The Istiqlal does not fail to retort that it is precisely the socialist states, friendly toward the Moroccan leftist parties, that defeated Moroccan efforts before the United Nations: "Let those who gratuitously criticize the failures of our diplomacy give proof of their own dynamism by exploiting their external relations for the benefit of the national cause!" (L'OPINION, 3 November).

Also, M'hamed Boucetta, shortly after coming to Paris on the occasion of the meeting of the great commission on cooperation, did not fail to make the same point in relation to the Soviet Union. It may be true that from an economic point

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of view, the plans are numerous and very important in the eyes of Morocco, especially as they concern the future exploitation of bituminous schist, phosphates, fishing, and the training of cadres, it is nevertheless true that for political concerns are overriding. Mr Boucetta, who met Mr Gromyko for an hour, took pains to let it be known that he had discussed "the recovered provinces, as well as the Moroccan campaign to explain and inform friendly countries that it is above all a question of the defense of our territorial integrity." The Moroccan public attached so much importance to these contacts with Moscow that rumors were even circulating about a secret voyage of the sovereign to the Soviet Union.

For analogous reasons, the American presidential election was followed and analyzed excitedly. A number of Moroccans accused Jimmy Carter of having systematically evaded all of Morocco's requests for reinforcement in military material, and of "having kept the modern arms for which Morocco had even paid." It is hoped, therefore, that the future president, and the new Senate, will put an end to these dilatory procedures, and it is anticipated that these new arms will greatly increase the effectiveness of the Moroccan forces in the Sahara.

But at the same time grave reservations have been articulated with regard to certain pro-Israeli and anti-Palestinian statements of Ronald Reagan. It is hoped, however, that this "campaign rhetoric" will not define the policy of the State Department. Morocco is counting a great deal on Saudi Arabia to influence Washington in this regard. It also hopes that the Islamic Conference, whose secretary general, Habib Chatty, just made a trip to Rabat, will succeed in making felt at the White House the weight of the Muslim world and the role that it is playing, especially in mobilizing Third World opinion on a problem such as Afghanistan. Moroccan diplomacy is also planning to apply itself directly in Washington on behalf of Palestine and Jerusalem, but also, and with immediate urgency, with a view to obtaining the military and political resources to end the Saharan conflict.

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PERSIAN GULF AREA

CORRESPONDENT DESCRIBES GULF REACTIONS TO IRAQ-IRAN WAR

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 21-27 Nov 80 pp 17-18

[Article: "Blood in a Sea of Oil: Gulf States Live in Limbo"]

[Text] The Iraqi-Iranian war is casting its gloomy shadow over the Arab Gulf, but the activity of daily life has not ceased at all, and is accompanied by feelings of official and popular sympathy for Iraq and pride in Arab might in confronting the Iranian challenges and threats. The AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI correspondent spent several days in some Gulf capitals and sent in this report recording his impressions of the war's repercussions on official Gulf policies and popular attitudes.

"Throughout its modern history, the Gulf has never know war in its advanced form. Over the last 25 years, the advent of petroleum and the subsequent economic and social florescence has firmly planted feelings of stability and reassurance in the Gulf.

"Now feelings have changed since the beginning of international polarization in and around the region, which has put great pressures on it. Then came the outbreak of the Iraqi-Iranian war, mixing blood with oil and bringing the entire Gulf to the threshold of a blazing furnace.

"But the negative reactions to the war have not prevented the spread of feelings opposed to, or parallel to, the uneasiness--a sense of growing Arab might and pride in the ability to impose self-respect and self-defense--even if that has required resorting to force.

"Arabs far from the Gulf might think this pride in the inclination to might strange, but the Gulf Arabs, who suffered twice from Iranian domination and threats, first during the Pahlavi era and then in the Khomeyni era, find in the Iraqi military victories something that restores confidence and reassurance to them.

"A forceful clash with Iran was inescapable, to bring it back to some degree of rationality in its dealings with the region's Arabs--peoples and regimes--and to reduce the loftiness and threatening language of its rhetoric.

"The attitude of the new regime in Teheran has been plain since its first days. It has stressed its refusal to restore the three Hormuz Straits islands to the UAE, and its leaders have issued threats to invade Iraq, the Gulf, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. It has claimed Bahrain, and has stressed its determination to export its revolution, with all its chaos and sickness, to the region. It has made broadcasts to incite

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religious minorities to insurrection, and its supporters and agents in Iraq and the Gulf states have acted to shake up stability and spread an atmosphere of uneasiness and tension.

"Throughout the Gulf today, there is a general, popular regard for Iraq as a strong arm protecting the Gulf, and it can be said that there is amazement at and pride in Saddam Husayn as an Arab leader who, through his firmness, courage and steadfastness, has been able to build a strong, stable country in little more than 10 years, and to impose it as a factor of strength and equilibrium in the regional and international struggles in the area.

"The Iraqi clash with Iran has restrained the recalcitrance of Iran's supporters in the Gulf. Now they have had enough of demonstrations and hurling threats, and their voices have become lower. The hopes which they had pinned on an Iranian counterattack against the Iraqi forces have been dashed, and pictures of Khomeyni have just about disappeared from the markets. Their hopes remained pinned on Washington to rescue them from collapse and protect Iran from disintegration, remembering that in the end America will never abandon its traditional regional allies, no matter who sits on the throne in Teheran.

#### Adjusting to the Circumstances of a Long War

"This is not to say that all the Gulf Shi'ites are sympathetic towards Iran. Alert Shi'ite groups have remained partial to their Arab affiliations, aware of the momentous errors into which the ruling Iranian religious organization has fallen.

"The fact is that the Gulf Arabs are getting ready to adjust to the circumstances of a long war. Preventive measures have been taken in the context of civil defense requirements. That does not mean that the Gulf states will find themselves embroiled in the war, unless they are pushed into it, should Iran for example, impelled by major defeats in the military sphere, bomb oil wells and economic installations in the Gulf states.

"The Gulf people can easily reconcile their pro-Iraqi feelings with their desire to stay out of the war, for they believe that the precariousness of their political circumstances, and the vulnerability of their oil fields, and their military forces which are still in the formative, growing stage, all require them to take the side of caution and agreeableness.

"This caution and agreeableness has not prevented the expression of feelings of official support and popular sympathy for Iraq. When the history of the Iraqi-Iranian war is written, it will record the attitudes of the Gulf states, which cannot be clarified under the circumstances of the ongoing war.

"All that can be said now is that the war has helped strengthen the bonds of Arab solidarity, especially in the region. This is reflected in the continual, almost-daily high-level personal contacts between Baghdad and the Gulf capitals, following up the developments of the military and political situation at close hand, and consulting about what must be done.

"This is the general climate left behind in the Gulf by the Iraqi-Iranian war. To give some details, one can speak of the general atmosphere in Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

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"The attention of observers was attracted by Saudi Arabia's prompt declaration of strong support for Kuwait, whose borders with Iraq were subjected to Iranian aerial bombing. Here it was explained that Saudi Arabia's traditional caution will not lead Riyadh to stand by with folded hands should any Gulf nation be subjected to an Iranian attack.

"It is no secret that there is coordination between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, not engendered by the war but dating back to the mid-1970's. This rapprochement between the two largest Arab countries in the Gulf, in spite of the differences in their political systems, has helped provide an air of mutual trust which facilitated the delineation of disputed borders and the coordination of oil policy in the OPEC context.

"Then came the 1978 Baghdad "Minimum" summit, giving this bilateral coordination an Arab dimension by opposing the Camp David program and stressing the importance of establishing practical Arab solidarity among the Arab states while maintaining the independence of their political systems and ideological stands. This new viewpoint in Arab policy was expressed in the National Charter proposed by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn as a basis for cooperation and mutual dealings not just between the Arab nations but between them and neighboring states.

#### Secrets of the al-Ta'if Meeting

"Iraqi-Saudi coordination culminated in the al-Ta'if meeting of last August between the Iraqi president and King Khalid and Crown Prince Fahd. This meeting was the dividing line in the transformation of coordination between the two countries into a kind of joint cooperation to ensure the region's well-being.

"It was agreed that the Arabs are the only ones qualified to guarantee the well-being of their region, freedom of navigation, and oil lines in their straits and seas. On this basis, it was agreed in principle that a nucleus for a joint Arab naval force for the region's states be formed, and that the ports of Qasab, Ra's Khamis, and the Sandam Peninsula be made into naval bases for this force, whether in the Gulf or the Red Sea.

"In the context of this plan, Saudi Arabia contracted with France to build a fleet of high-speed boats and cruisers, while Iraq made efforts to obtain powerful engines for its Italian-made armed boats.

"The two states also put pressure on South Yemen to convince it to refrain from providing the Soviet fleet with naval bases and facilities at Aden and Socotra, while Saudi Arabia asked the United States to keep its fleets away from the Strait of Hormuz. It also made indirect Arab efforts to get Cairo to stop considering offering Egyptian naval bases and facilities to the American fleet in the Red Sea, but this attempt was apparently unsuccessful.

"Also in the context of Gulf coordination, there was cooperation among Gulf states to impose strict, joint security surveillance to forestall any sabotage attempt to shake up the stability of the region or damage its petroleum and economic installations. At present, the oil fields are being surrounded by an electronic warning and surveillance grid.

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"However, Saudi policy has not dropped the American factor from its calculations in viewing the international polarization of the region.

"Riyadh had strong reservations about Carter's heedless policy towards Soviet breakthroughs in Central Asia and the African Horn, which placed the Gulf in the jaws of a pincers. Then came the Camp David agreements and Egypt's separation from the Arab body, greatly complicating the American-Saudi special relationship.

"From this starting point, the Saudis are looking forward to the administration of his successor, President Reagan, with a certain amount of reserved optimism, because Saudi Arabia's firm relationship with the financiers, businessmen and oilmen of Reagan's country will make him take a realistic view of the region so as to preserve American interests and lessen his exuberance for supporting Israel, which he had expressed during his election campaign.

"While waiting for Reagan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had to address an official warning to Carter's administration against resuming supplying Iran with spare parts for its arms and military equipment. The warning was forceful, so as to leave no room for doubt that the Gulf Arabs are prepared to reduce their oil production, thereby making the United States responsible for the resultant dangers to the Western economy.

"In any case, official Saudi circles will consider the F-16 airplane issue a test for the coming Reagan administration in its dealings with Saudi Arabia and in its outlook towards the region's states.

"It is known that Saudi Arabia asked that these planes, which it had contracted to buy about 2 years ago, be provided with electronic equipment and special planes to fuel them in mid-air, so as to increase the range of its airforce. This is violently opposed by the Zionist lobby in the United States, and Carter backed off from it during his presidential struggle.

#### The Purpose Behind Holding the Arab Summit

"The Saudis believe that Arab solidarity is necessary at this time, even if only in a formal sense, to stress to America and Europe that the Arabs are determined to impose a solution to the Middle East issue and the Palestinian cause in agreement with their just rights.

"On this basis, the Saudis are supporting Jordan's insistence on holding the Arab summit in 'Amman on its appointed date (25 November).

"The Arab states which support convening the summit on its appointed date want to confirm a collective Arab stand against the Camp David plan, and to pressure Europe to adopt a more supportive attitude towards the PLO, in return for a promise to ensure Europe's oil needs, regardless of the current situation in the Gulf, which has led to a suspension of Iraqi and Iranian oil pumping.

"But it seems that Arab differences and splits might prevent the conference from being convened on time. Syria has requested its postponement, supported by Libya, South Yemen and the PLO. Algeria might also support it, on the pretext that these differences would prevent the adoption of a definite Arab stand.

"Information available here indicates that Libya and Syria don't want the Arab summit to throw its entire weight behind Iraq by declaring a stand of solidarity with it, something which would be a setback to the governments of the two countries which support Iran.

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"This is the general atmosphere in Saudi Arabia in light of the Iraqi-Iranian war. But what about Kuwait, the state closest to the blaze of the struggle?

"Kuwait City clearly heard the thump of artillery and the explosion of rockets in the first stage of the war, when the clashes were occurring on the Iraqi-Iranian borders near Basrah.

"But last week's Iranian air attack on the al-'Abdali area on the Iraqi border was considered the first Iranian attempt to expand the scope of the war.

The Significance of the Bombing of al'Abdali

"In spite of the obscurity surrounding the incident, it can be said that the bombing resulted in no physical damage or loss of life. However, it is considered extremely significant, inasmuch as the al-'Abdali area is now very much like a bridge for going from Kuwait to Iraq and vice-versa, and caravans of trucks carrying oil and products imported by Iraq by sea through Kuwaiti ports cross over it.

"Kuwait submitted official protests to Iran over the incident, and the Iranian ambassador to Kuwait hastened to offer a sort of overt apology for it. But it is obvious that the bombing, if it was intentional and not the result of the downing of an Iranian plane by Iraqi artillery, was meant by Iran to be a warning to Kuwait to not aid Iraq.

"Kuwait has actually adopted an official stand on the conflict much more reserved than those of other Gulf states. But it is impossible for Kuwait, because of ties of brotherhood, blood and neighborliness, to refrain from providing humane services to Iraq, such as accepting some Iraqis injured in the war, and taking in some refugees who crossed the borders when Iranian artillery shelled Basrah prior to the retreat of the Iranian forces.

"The Kuwaitis and the Arabs living in Kuwait have been unable to repress their sympathetic Arab feelings for Iraq. The Kuwaiti papers openly support Iraq, and there have been popular demonstrations in support of Iraq and Saddam Husayn in which Palestinians and Iraqi laborers working in Kuwait have participated.

"When Iran threatened the Gulf states with bringing the war to them if they supported Iraq, Kuwait, as a precautionary measure, closed the al-Shu'aybah fertilizer plant and the oil refinery, to prevent the outbreak of fires or the spread of poisonous gases. It also stationed troops and camouflaged weapons around the water and power plants. The buzz of Kuwaiti Mirage airplanes circling in the air is no longer strange to Kuwaiti ears.

"Now that several weeks of war have passed, the Kuwaitis and the residents have become accustomed to their surroundings. Daily commercial activity has returned to its level before the outbreak of the conflict, but no one forgets that on the other side of the Gulf there is a war, the developments of which might decide the destiny of the region for a long time to come."

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WESTERN SAHARA

BRIEFS

CUBAN, SAHARAN OFFICIALS MEET--Algiers, Dec 10 (PL)--The ambassador of Cuba in Algeria, Raul Barzaga, and the chancellor of the Republic of Saharaui, Ibrahim Hakim, talked, in a meeting, about the positive bilateral relations between both countries. During the conversations that lasted for more than one hour, both parts analyzed the fastened ties which unite both governments and people. They also evaluated the possibility of reinforcing and broadening the relations between Cuba and the Arab Democratic Republic of Saharaui (ADRS). Barzaga and Hakim also dialogued about aspects of the international situation, mainly about the North of Africa and the independence struggle of the people of Saharaui. The Saharauian chancellor reaffirmed his confidence and optimism on the definite victory that will be obtained by that people, under its legitimate representative, the POLISARIO Front. [Text] [PA092131 Havana PRELA in English 2010 GMT 9 Dec 80]

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